

50. (Reiterated) The system of claim 48 in which the interactions are triggered to occur repetitively for each of the users based on repeated uses of a feature of a unit of the commodity by the user.

51. (Reiterated) The system of claim 48 in which the user interface comprises part of a functional user interface of the unit of the commodity that is used to control features of the commodity.

53. (Reiterated) The system of claim 48 in which the units of the commodity comprise telephone extension equipment and the central location comprises a private branch exchange or other central telephone network facility.

54. (Reiterated) The system of claim 48 in which the results of the interactions are forwarded from the central location to a remote server for analysis.

55. (Reiterated) The system of claim 48 in which the units of the commodity comprise facsimile equipment and the user interface triggers the two-way interaction to occur on-line between the unit of the facsimile equipment and a vendor of the facsimile equipment.

56. (Reiterated) The system of claim 55 in which the on-line interaction occurs by voice spoken through the facsimile machine's handset, transmitted by telephone line to a computer of the vendor, and stored at the vendor's computer.

57. (Reiterated) The system of claim 48 in which the units of the commodity comprise consumer television equipment.

58. (Amended) The system of claim 48 in which the two-way interaction provides instructions on how to use the commodity.

59. (Reiterated) The system of claim 57 in which the two-way interaction comprises posing questions to a user on a television screen concerning use of the commodity and receiving answers from the user expressed through a keypad or a held-held remote.

60. (Reiterated) The system of claim 59 in which the answers are forwarded to a vendor of the commodity.

61. (Reiterated) The system of claim 48 in which the two-way interaction is mediated by an publicly or privately accessible on-line computerized information service.

62. (Amended) The system of claim 48 in which the user interface presents information in one or more of the following styles: text, lists, charts, views, arrangements, hierarchies, graphical maps, sample extracts, abstracts, summary descriptions, or hypertext.

63. (Reiterated) The system of claim 62 in which the user interface triggers two-way interactions that comprise training based on two-way interactions with all or some other users, the interactions being arranged to present actions that the user could take to increase performance or satisfaction to a level achieved by other users.

71. (Reiterated) The system of claim 48 wherein the user interface includes a sound recorder.

72. (Reiterated) The system of claim 48 wherein the units of commodity are configured to store voice or sound information.

73. (Reiterated) The system of claim 48 wherein the units of commodity are configured to digitize voice or sound information.

74. (Reiterated) The system of claim 48 wherein the two-way interaction comprises voice communication.

75. (Reiterated) The system of claim 48 wherein the user interface includes a console displaying text or graphics.

76. (Reiterated) The system of claim 48 wherein the console comprises a display of a computer, phone, or handheld device.

77. (Reiterated) The system of claim 48 wherein the software is configured to provide access to the collection of results to vendors of the commodity.

78. (Reiterated) The system of claim 48 wherein the software is configured to provide access to the collection of results to the users of the commodity.

79. (Reiterated) The system of claim 48 wherein the software is configured to provide access to the collection of results to third parties.

80. (Reiterated) The system of claim 59 in which the keypad or hand-held remote comprises numeric keys.

81. (Reiterated) The system of claim 62 in which the style is hypertext.

82. (Reiterated) The system of claim 48 in which the units of commodity store probes that elicit information from the respective users.

83. (Reiterated) The system of claim 82 in which the software that manages the interactions of the users sends the probes to each of the units of the commodity.

-- 84. The system of claim 48 in which the information about the commodity comprises value information.

85. The system of claim 84 in which the value information comprises usage logs.

86. The system of claim 84 in which the value information comprises information about user comprehension.

87. The system of claim 84 in which the value information comprises information about user performance.

88. The method of claim 84 in which the value information guides a user's interaction with the commodity.

89. The method of claim 84 in which the value information comprises marketing information or information about future product design.

90. A system comprising  
units of a telephonic device that are used by respective users in different locations,  
a user interface which is part of each of the units and provides a medium for two-way local interaction between one of the users and the corresponding unit for generating information about use of the unit by the user,  
a communication element that is associated with each of the units and carries results of the two-way local interaction from each of the units to a central location, and  
software that manages the interactions of the users in different locations and collection of the results of the interactions at the central location.

91. The system of claim 90 in which the units of the commodity comprise telephone extension equipment and the central location comprises a private branch exchange or other central telephone network facility.

92. The system of claim 90 the units of the commodity comprise facsimile equipment and the user interface triggers the two-way interaction to occur on-line between the unit of the facsimile equipment and a vendor of the facsimile equipment.

93. The system of claim 90 in which the user interface is electronically triggered based on user behaviors to generate two-way interactions with each of the users, each of the interactions relating to a corresponding specific one of the behaviors.

94. The system of claim 90 wherein the software is configured to provide access to the collection of results to the users of the commodity.

95. The system of claim 90 wherein the software is configured to provide access to the collection of results to vendors of the commodity

96. The system of claim 90 wherein the software is configured to provide access to the collection of results to third parties.

97. The system of claim 92 in which the on-line interaction occurs by voice spoken through the facsimile machine's handset, transmitted by telephone line to a computer of the vendor, and stored at the vendor's computer.

98. A system comprising  
units of a commodity that are used by respective users in different locations,  
a user interface which is part of each of the units of the commodity and provides a medium for two-way local interaction between one of the users and the corresponding unit of the commodity for generating information about use of the unit of the commodity by the user,  
a communication element that is associated with each of the units of the commodity and carries results of the two-way local interaction from each of the units of the commodity to a central location, and

software that manages the interactions of the users in different locations and collection of the results of the interactions at the central location and provides access to the collection of results to a third party.

99. The system of claim 98 in which the results of the interactions are forwarded from the central location to the third party.

100. The system of claim 98 in which the results of the interactions are forwarded from the central location to the remote server for analysis.

101. The system of claim 98 in which the third party is a vendor of the commodity.

102. The system of claim 99 in which the third party is a vendor of the commodity.

103. The system of claim 98 in which the third party is a designer of the commodity.

104. The system of claim 98 wherein the user interface presents user information in a style that comprises hypertext.

104. The system of claim 98 in which the user interface is electronically triggered based on user behaviors to generate two-way interactions with each of the users, each of the interactions relating to a corresponding specific one of the behaviors.

105. The system of claim 98 in which the interactions are triggered based on repeated use of a feature of a unit of the commodity by the user.

106. The system of claim 98 in which the software is further configured to provide access to the collection of results to the users of the commodity.

107. The system of claim 98 in which the interactions elicit information about steps that a vendor of the commodity could take to improve the user's satisfaction.

108. The system of claim 98 in which the interactions elicit information about training or support provided for users of the commodity.

109. A system comprising  
units of a commodity that are used by respective users in different locations,  
a user interface which is part of each of the units of the commodity and provides a medium for two-way local interaction between one of the users and the corresponding unit of the commodity for communicating instructional information about use of the unit of the commodity by the user,

a communication element that is associated with each of the units of the commodity and carries results of the two-way local interaction from each of the units of the commodity to a central location, and

software that manages the interactions of the users in different locations and collection of the results of the interactions at the central location.

110. The system of claim 109 in which the two-way interaction provides instructions on how to use the commodity.

111. The system of claim 109 in which the user interface triggers two-way interactions that comprise training based on two-way interactions with all or some other users, the interactions being arranged to present actions that the user could take to increase performance or satisfaction to a level achieved by other users.

112. The system of claim 111 in which the user interface is electronically triggered based on user behaviors to generate two-way interactions with each of the users, each of the interactions relating to a corresponding specific one of the behaviors.

113. The system of claim 112 in which the interface is triggered based on user comprehension.

114. The system of claim 112 in which the interface is triggered by an exception resulting from use of the commodity.

115. The system of claim 112 in which the interface is triggered by a user-initiated help request during use of a product, service, or software feature.

116. The system of claim 111 wherein the software is configured to provide access to the collection of results to the users of the commodity.

117. The system of claim 111 wherein the software is configured to provide access to the collection of results to a vendor of the commodity.

118. The system of claim 111 wherein the user interface presents user information in a style that comprises hypertext.

119. A system comprising  
units of a commodity that are used by respective users in different locations,  
a user interface which is part of each of the units of the commodity, provides a  
medium for two-way local interaction between one of the users and the corresponding unit of the  
commodity for generating information about use of the unit of the commodity by the user, and  
presents user information in a style that comprises hypertext,  
a communication element that is associated with each of the units of the  
commodity and carries results of the two-way local interaction from each of the units of the  
commodity to a central location, and  
software that manages the interactions of the users in different locations and collection of  
the results of the interactions at the central location.



120. The system of claim 119 in which the user interface is electronically triggered based on user behaviors to generate two-way interactions with each of the users, each of the interactions relating to a corresponding specific one of the behaviors.

121. The system of claim 119 in which the interactions are triggered based on repeated use of a feature of a unit of the commodity by the user.

122. The system of claim 119 wherein the software is further configured to provide access to the collection of results to the users of the commodity.

123. The system of claim 119 in which the two-way interaction provides instructions on how to use the commodity.

124. The system of claim 119 in which the two-way interaction is mediated by an publicly or privately accessible on-line computerized information service.

125. The system of claim 119 in which the user interface triggers two-way interactions that comprise training based on two-way interactions with all or some other users, the interactions being arranged to present actions that the user could take to increase performance or satisfaction to a level achieved by other users.

126. A system comprising  
units of a commodity that are used by respective users in different locations and store probes that elicit information from the respective users,  
a user interface which is part of each of the units of the commodity and provides a medium for two-way local interaction between one of the users and the corresponding unit of the commodity for generating information about use of the unit of the commodity by the user,  
a communication element that is associated with each of the units of the commodity and carries results of the two-way local interaction from each of the units of the commodity to a central location, and

software that manages the interactions of the users in different locations and collection of the results of the interactions at the central location and sends the probes to each of the units of the commodity.

127. The system of claim 126 wherein the user interface presents user information in a style that comprises hypertext.

128. The system of claim 126 in which the user interface is electronically triggered based on user behaviors to generate two-way interactions with each of the users, each of the interactions relating to a corresponding specific one of the behaviors.

129. The system of claim 126 in which the interactions are triggered based on repeated use of a feature of a unit of the commodity by the user.

130. The system of claim 126 wherein the software is further configured to provide access to the collection of results to the users of the commodity.

131. The system of claim 126 wherein the software is further configured to provide access to the collection of results to vendors of the commodity.

132. The system of claim 126 wherein the user interface presents user information in a style that comprises hypertext.

133. The system of claim 126 in which the results of the interactions are forwarded from the central location to the remote server for analysis.

134. The system of claim 126 in which the two-way interaction provides instructions on how to use the commodity .

135. A system comprising  
units of a commodity that comprises consumer television equipment, the units  
being used by respective users in different locations,  
a user interface which is part of each of the units of the commodity and provides a  
medium for two-way local interaction between one of the users and the corresponding unit of the  
commodity for generating information about use of the unit of the commodity by the user,  
a communication element that is associated with each of the units of the  
commodity and carries results of the two-way local interaction from each of the units of the  
commodity to a central location, and  
software that manages the interactions of the users in different locations and  
collection of the results of the interactions at the central location.

136. The system of claim 135 in which the two-way interaction provides instructions  
on how to use the commodity.

137. The system of claim 135 in which the two-way interaction comprises posing  
questions to a user on a television screen concerning use of the commodity and receiving  
answers from the user expressed through a keypad or a held-held remote.

138. The system of claim 137 in which the answers are forwarded to a vendor of the  
commodity. --